

## In this Issue: *Home Safety*

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- [Get a Bone Density Test](#): Find out if you are at risk for osteoporosis



## June: Home Safety Month

Each year there are nearly 20,000 deaths and 21 million medical visits due to home-related injuries. The top five leading causes of injury-related deaths in the home are:

1. falls
2. poisonings
3. fires and burns
4. choking and suffocation
5. drowning

If you want to learn more about taking some simple hands-on steps to create a safer home environment, visit the Home Safety Council Web site at: [www.homesafetycouncil.org/hsmplanners/hsmplanners.aspx](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/hsmplanners/hsmplanners.aspx).

### June National Health Observances

#### Fireworks Safety

[www.preventblindness.org](http://www.preventblindness.org)

#### Home Safety

[www.homesafetycouncil.org/homesafetymonth](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/homesafetymonth)

#### Myasthenia Gravis Awareness

[www.myasthenia.org](http://www.myasthenia.org)

#### National Aphasia Awareness

[www.aphasia.org](http://www.aphasia.org)

#### National Scleroderma Awareness

[www.scleroderma.org](http://www.scleroderma.org)

#### Vision Research

[www.preventblindness.org](http://www.preventblindness.org)

For a comprehensive list of 2007 National Health Observances, visit [www.healthfinder.gov/library/nho](http://www.healthfinder.gov/library/nho).

## Make Your Home Safe

- Make sure all medications and prescriptions have not expired.
- Immediately mop up puddles of anti-freeze and car oil in the garage or driveway.
- Keep space heaters at least three feet away from things that can burn, such as curtains or stacks of newspaper.
- Always stay in the kitchen while cooking.
- Window blind cords can present a serious strangulation hazard.
- Remove squeakers from squeeze toys. Babies may detach squeakers and choke.
- Never swim alone. Even adults should swim with a buddy.

Source: [www.homesafetycouncil.org/homesafetymonth](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/homesafetymonth)

## Focus on Fall Prevention

For people age 65 and older, falling can cause serious injuries and health problems. More than 1 in 3 older adults fall each year. Among older adults, falls are the number one cause of fractures, hospital admissions for trauma, loss of independence, and injury deaths.

Older adults usually fall during everyday activities like walking on stairs or going to the bathroom. Sometimes people fall because they have a medical condition, like dizziness or balance problems, or they may trip over things in their home.

### What can you do to lower your risk of falling?

- Exercise to improve your strength, balance and bones.
- Get your eyes checked. You may be wearing a prescription that's too strong or too weak.
- Ask your doctor to review your medications. Some medicines can make you dizzy.
- Make your home safer (see tips on the next page).

## Prevent Falls: Tips for Caregivers

Caregivers play an important role in making the home safe. Here is a list of things caregivers can do to help prevent falls:

- Pick up things that can be tripped over. Do not leave things on the stairs or other places where people walk.
- Remove small rugs or use double-sided tape to keep the rugs from slipping.
- Have grab bars put in next to the toilet and in the tub or shower.
- Keep items used often in cabinets easily reachable without using a step stool.
- Keep the phone next to the bed or favorite chair.

For a complete fall prevention checklist on ways to make each room of the home safe visit:

[www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/toolkit/Falls\\_ToolKit/DesktopPDF/English/booklet\\_Eng\\_desktop.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/toolkit/Falls_ToolKit/DesktopPDF/English/booklet_Eng_desktop.pdf).

## Did you know?

Calcium and vitamin D strengthen bones and can help prevent breaks during a fall. Even if you aren't concerned about falling, everyone needs calcium and vitamin D to maintain strong bones. Check out the following Web sites to see what foods are rich in calcium and vitamin D. Also, discover how much you need each day.

Calcium: <http://dietary-supplements.info.nih.gov/factsheets/calcium.asp#h2>

Vitamin D: <http://dietary-supplements.info.nih.gov/factsheets/vitaminD.asp#h3>

## Are You at Risk for Osteoporosis? Get a Bone Density Test.

If you are age 65 or older, it's time to get a test to find out your bone strength. This is called a bone density test. The test will tell you if you are at risk for osteoporosis.

Osteoporosis is a disease of the bones. It means your bones are weak and more likely to break. There are no signs or symptoms of osteoporosis. You might not know you have the disease until you break a bone. Anyone can get osteoporosis, but it's most common in older women. The older you are, the greater your risk of osteoporosis.

A bone density test does not hurt. It's like an x-ray or scan of your body. It only takes about 15 minutes.

Depending on the results of your bone density test, the doctor may:

- give you medicine to stop bone loss
- tell you to exercise more to strengthen your bones
- urge you to eat more calcium and vitamin D in your diet

**For more resources on fall prevention, bone density testing and other health topics, visit:**

[www.healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov)

## Resources

CDC Foundation

[www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/toolkit/Falls\\_ToolKit/DesktopPDF/English/booklet\\_Eng\\_desktop.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/toolkit/Falls_ToolKit/DesktopPDF/English/booklet_Eng_desktop.pdf)

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases: Ways to Prevent Falls

[www.niams.nih.gov/bone/hi/ff\\_falls\\_prevention.htm](http://www.niams.nih.gov/bone/hi/ff_falls_prevention.htm)

NIH SeniorHealth

<http://nihseniorhealth.gov/falls/toc.html>

<http://nihseniorhealth.gov/osteoporosis/whatisosteoporosis/01.html>

NIH National Library of Medicine Bone Densitometry Tutorial

[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/tutorials/bonedensitometry/htm/\\_no\\_50\\_no\\_0.htm](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/tutorials/bonedensitometry/htm/_no_50_no_0.htm)

Home Safety Council

[www.homesafetycouncil.org/index.aspx](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/index.aspx)